

ment of the elevated station at 82d Street. This museum now enjoys the best location of any in the country, so far as ease of access is concerned and not unnaturally stands first in the number of its visitors.

Museum attendance, as shown by the report of the U. S. National Museum, is subject to great fluctuation and, like sun-spots, has its maximum and minimum periods. After each inaugural year there is a drop to below the normal and in the years 1905 and 1906 attendance was less than in any previous year. There is a curious correlation between the loss here and the great falling off in attendance at the British Museum, where the Bloomsbury Square institution reports a loss of 122,000 and the Museum of Natural History of 95,000 visitors. It can not be said that this is due to any fault or deterioration of the exhibits or administration of these or other museums.

The American and Field Museums both offer extended series of lectures on topics akin to the work of the museums and these are fairly well attended. The Field Museum has arranged to have its lectures during the coming year given in the Hall of the Art Institute, in which it will not be handicapped by its location.

After all, the amount of real good effected by lectures is somewhat of a problem. Formerly lectures were given because the speaker had something to impart, but not unnaturally the pictures have come to be regarded as more important than the words, or at least more desired by the public. This is not wholly to be wondered at or deplored, for pictures often give a clearer idea of facts and things than descriptions, illustrations being the equivalent of the objects on exhibition in a museum.

It is very evident from the lists of material received and papers published that the scientific side of museum work is not receiving any less attention than heretofore, simply the public is very properly getting more.

F. A. LUCAS

#### *THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY*

A COMMITTEE of the general society has been formed to arrange for a meeting to be held on

April 23, 24 and 25, 1908. The committee consists of George F. Barker, Philadelphia; John A. Brashear, Pittsburg; William Keith Brooks, Baltimore; Ernest W. Brown, New Haven; Thomas C. Chamberlin, Chicago; Charles F. Chandler, New York; Edwin Grant Conklin, Philadelphia; Henry H. Donaldson, Philadelphia; Charles L. Doolittle, Upper Darby, Pa.; Arthur W. Goodspeed, Philadelphia; I. Minis Hays, Philadelphia; Morris Jastrow, Jr., Philadelphia; David Starr Jordan, Stanford University, Cal.; Charles R. Lanman, Cambridge; Marion D. Learned, Philadelphia; Simon Newcomb, Washington; Edward L. Nichols, Ithaca; Henry F. Osborn, New York; Edward C. Pickering, Cambridge; Henry A. Pilsbry, Philadelphia; Ira Remsen, Baltimore; William B. Scott, Princeton; Thomas Day Seymour, New Haven; Edgar F. Smith, Philadelphia; Edward B. Titchener, Ithaca; William Trelease, St. Louis, Charles D. Walcott, Washington; Woodrow Wilson, Princeton; William H. Welch, Baltimore; Robert S. Woodward, Washington.

This committee has sent out the following letter:

The American Philosophical Society has satisfactorily shown that the interests of useful knowledge in the United States may be greatly promoted by the annual general meetings of the society. Such meetings have proved attractive to its members in all parts of the country, not only because of the general interest in the scientific communications offered, but also because of the opportunities afforded of renewing and extending acquaintanceship among workers in the various fields of knowledge, and they have markedly broadened the field of usefulness of this, the oldest scientific society in America.

The general meeting of 1908 will be held on April 23 to 25, beginning at 2 P.M. on Thursday, April 23, and the above committee has been appointed to make the necessary arrangements.

Members desiring to present papers, either for themselves or others, are requested to send to the secretaries, at as early a date as practicable, and not later than March 25, 1908, the titles of these papers, so that they may be announced on the program which will be issued immediately thereafter, and which will give in detail the arrangements for the meeting.

Papers in any department of science come within the scope of the society, which, as its name indi-

cates, embraces the whole field of useful knowledge.

The publication committee, under the rules of the society, will arrange for the immediate publication of the papers presented.

The activity of the society is reflected in the increasing volume of its publications, which constitute a series covering one hundred and forty years, and include *Transactions* in quarto and *Proceedings* in octavo; its exchange list embraces most of the scientific societies of the world. The society thus offers valuable avenues of prompt publication and wide circulation of the papers read before it.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE colleagues and friends of Professor A. A. Michelson and those who appreciate the honor done to this country by the conferring on him of the Copley medal of the Royal Society and the Nobel prize in physics, have arranged to unite in a dinner at Chicago on January 3, the last day of the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

THE Munich Academy of Sciences has elected as corresponding members Mr. G. K. Gilbert, of the U. S. Geological Survey, and Professor J. J. Thomson, professor of experimental physics at Cambridge University.

THE Hayden memorial geological medal of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia will be presented to Mr. Charles D. Walcott, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution on Tuesday evening, January 7. The presentation address will be made by Dr. Persifer Frazer.

SIR W. H. BENNETT has been elected president of the Institute of Hygiene, London, in succession to the late Sir W. H. Broadbent.

DR. BERTHOLD LAUFER, lecturer in anthropology in Columbia University, has accepted the position of curator in the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago and will proceed on January 7 to Thibet, where he will spend three years. The money for the expedition has been given anonymously.

PROFESSOR DUGALD C. JACKSON, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, has consented to act as temporary technical assistant of the expert accountant engaged in

devising a system of bookkeeping by which the city can keep informed of the financial operations of the Chicago Telephone Company under the new ordinance.

DR. GEO. I. ADAMS, has returned to Washington from Peru, where since 1905 he has been chief geologist to the government of Peru.

A SMITHSONIAN grant has just been approved by Secretary Walcott in favor of Professor William Hallock, of Columbia University, New York, to investigate a 3,300-foot well near Oakland, Maryland. Among other things, Dr. Hallock will determine, if possible, the conductivity of gas at this extreme depth and will try to get information as to the possible radioactivity of rock far below the surface.

PROFESSOR HENRY B. WARD, of the University of Nebraska, has been elected a foreign member of the Russian Imperial Society for the Acclimatization of Animals and Plants.

THE Société d'Anthropologie de Paris has elected Dr. Ales Hrdlička an associate foreign member. Heretofore he had been a corresponding member.

DR. STROUD proposes to resign the Cavendish professorship of physics in Leeds University, after twenty-two years' service.

DR. HERMANN GRAF ZU SOLMS LAUBACH, professor of botany at the University of Strasburg, has retired from active service.

DR. GUSTAV JÄGER, of Stuttgart, known for his contributions to hygiene, has celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his doctorate.

It is stated in *Nature* that Mr. Haffkine has accepted an appointment to a post at Calcutta offered to him by the secretary of state for India. It will be remembered that Mr. Haffkine was held responsible for an unfortunate accident that occurred in the Punjab in connection with plague inoculation, an accident for which a large body of scientific opinion has pronounced him to be in no way to blame.

WE learn from the *Geographical Record* that Mr. Leo Frobenius, the German ethnologist and explorer, whose researches along the